

Berks and Bucks look a spent force

Berks & Bucks 1, Leicester & Rutland 3 (a.e.t.)

HOT FAVOURITES for the 1971 Southern Counties Amateur Championship, Berks and Bucks, were stopped dead in their tracks by the little known outsiders from Leicestershire and Rutland in Saturday's semi-final at Loakes Park.

For all the star names the allied counties could muster, the toll of a season's hard campaigning in club competitions played a blatant and fatal role in the killing of these particular giants.

Team manager Barry Darvill, a sad man on Saturday night, summed it all up: "It was just a bad day all round for us—disappointing for everybody concerned."

All, that is, except the visitors, whose jubilation was only equalled by their clear surprise at reaching the final.

Berks and Bucks, including seven Wycombe Wanderers—four of them internationals—were shattered by two quick goals in extra time.

But, as manager Darvill pointed out: "All of our players looked totally spent. Nobody played up to their reputation, but all credit to Leicester—what they lacked in ability they made up for by getting down to the job."

Not surprisingly much of Wycombe's current problem—

jaded football from over-worked players—was evident in the allied counties display.

Barry Baker was brought in to replace the injured Larry Pritchard, but goalkeeper John Maskell—despite a badly bruised hip which forced his withdrawal from Wycombe's match at Barking the previous Thursday—managed to pass fit.

Several glaring misses by the home strikers kept the scoreline blank by the interval. The Maidenhead duo Mick Chatterton and Brian Woolley, which had played such a vital part in

the Berks and Bucks' run this season, failed badly.

And, soon into the second half, Leicester went ahead. Wright shot in off the upright.

The allied counties grew progressively worse from that point, yet managed an equaliser in the last 15 minutes when Johnny Hutchinson's centre from 20 yards down the right wing, found its way into the net after several clearance attempts had failed.

Leicester went ahead again within minutes of the start of extra time. The goal—"a complete disaster", to quote Darvill

—came as suddenly as it was totally unnecessary. Iain MacLean—who had swapped mid-field role for defence with Ted Powell—received the ball from Maskell and held it, awaiting a challenge. But he completely miskicked the ball when that challenge came and Scriggins beat John Delaney to net the softest of goals.

In double quick time, Leicester added another through newly-arrived substitute Sheard.

Brian Pitts, a defender, replaced Chatterton for the second half of extra time, the Maidenhead man retiring after aggravating an ankle injury, Delaney moving up into attack.

BERKS & BUCKS: J. Maskell; G. Titterton (Wokingham), S. Bates (Chesham), E. Powell, J. Delaney, I. MacLean, G. Anthony, B. Baker, M. Chatterton (Maidenhead) (Sub.), B. Pitts, Wokingham, 107 mins., B. Woolley (Maidenhead), J. Hutchinson. All players from Wycombe Wanderers unless stated.